

Citizen Trade Policy Commission

Friday, January 21, 2005

State House, Room 127, Augusta

Meeting Summary

Members present: Sen. Margaret Rotundo (co-chair), Sen. Kevin Raye, Sen. Bruce Bryant, Rep. John Patrick (co-chair), Rep. Roderick Carr, Dr. Robert Wiess, Liz Wyman, Vanessa Santarelli, Mary Ellen Johnston, Peter Connell, Paul Volckhausen, Jim Dusch, Mark Haggerty, Bjorn Claeson, Matt Schlobohm, Richard Coyle, Carla Dickstein, James Wilfong

Members absent: Absent: Rep. Deborah Hutton, Cynthia Phinney, Barbara Van BURGEL

Staff present: Curtis Bentley, Legislative Analyst and Nicole Dube, Legislative Analyst

I. Introductions

Sen. Rotundo convened the Commission meeting and asked Commission members to introduce themselves and make introductory remarks. Paul Volckhausen informed the Commission that he will be going to El Salvador regarding organic farmers and trade issues and will report back to the Commission at its next meeting. He also requested the Commission send an introductory letter with him to share with interested parties in El Salvador.

II. Presentation on CAFTA

William Warren and Sylvia TONOVA from the Forum on Democracy and Trade briefed the Commission on CAFTA and addressed other areas of international trade agreements. William Warren provided handouts outlining the presentation.

III. Commission Work Session

A. Information Requests from Last Meeting

In response to information requests from the Commission at its December 16th meeting, Richard Coyle provided the Commission with the following: written examples of retaliatory tariffs imposed by the European Union, information about requests received by the Center from people who had experienced problems involving trade agreements and information on single points of contact for the United States Trade Representative in each state.

B. Scheduling Future Commission Meetings

The Commission discussed scheduling future Commission meetings and agreed to meet on the last Friday of each month at 9:00 AM. The Commission will conduct its business in the mornings and subcommittees will convene in the afternoon. The Commission agreed to request the USTR to brief the Commission at a future meeting and directed

subcommittees to prepare questions to be sent to the USTR prior to the briefing. The Commission agreed to send the USTR its questions for a written response even if the USTR is unable to attend a Commission meeting. The Commission also agreed to invite members or representatives from Maine's Congressional Delegation to brief the Commission on trade issues and to discuss ways to effectively work together.

C. February 3rd Public Hearing in Bangor

The Commission discussed the structure of the February 3rd public hearing and agreed that it should be conducted according to the same protocol as legislative public hearings. The Commission directed staff to distribute the press release to all municipalities and development districts. The Commission also directed staff to begin to compile a more extensive list of interested parties.

D. Update from the Legislation Subcommittee

The Legislation Subcommittee briefed the Commission on its recent work. Before drafting possible legislation, the subcommittee felt it was necessary to first develop overall goals and strategies to determine if legislation was necessary and/or appropriate at this time. The subcommittee asked the Commission to further consider these proposed goals and strategies before introducing legislation and noted that the authorizing legislation allows the Commission to introduce legislation at any time.

Bjourn Claeson also briefed the Commission on his recent conversation with Kay Wilkie, Chair of the USTR's Intergovernmental Policy Advisory Committee (IGPAC) and provided a list of IGPAC members.

VI. Sub-committee Work Sessions

The Commission broke into its three subcommittees (healthcare, environment/natural resources and labor/economic development) to continue to develop and implement work plans and generate CAFTA questions for a Commission letter to the USTR. The full Commission then reconvened and each subcommittee briefed the Commission on its work.

VII. Next Meeting

The Commission agreed to hold its next meeting on Friday, February 25th at 9:00 AM. Richard Coyle agreed to work with Sen. Raye to determine the availability of the USTR and staff from Maine's congressional delegation to brief the Commission.

V. Adjournment

The Commission adjourned at 4:00 pm.